

**Woonsocket Health and Wellness Subcommittee Meeting  
February 22, 2016 @ 4:00 p.m., Rm 334  
Woonsocket Middle School – Hamlet Building**

Present: D. Burke, S. Pawlina, E. Shalvey, M. Thompson

The meeting was called to order at 4:05 P.M.

E. Shalvey will reach out to Lisa from Thundermist to extend invitation to students. M. Thompson will ask his PTO president to invite other parents to attend future meetings.

**Consideration and approval minutes of January 21, 2016: S. Pawlina**

**Discussion:** There are only four people in attendance; M. Thompson asked if this vote would require a quorum. E. Shalvey stated that in the past (which was a few years ago) the formality of a quorum did not apply. She wasn't sure what was required now. It was established at the last meeting that meetings would will be held on the fourth Monday of each month. Starting with the next meeting of March 28<sup>th</sup>, agenda and notice will be sent early as a reminder. Since attendees may differ at each meeting, the core subcommittee members D. Burke, S. Pawlina and E. Shalvey will vote; the policy must be updated. The state law does designate specific roles to make the subcommittee. Clarification is needed to identify subcommittee members and attendees.

**Motion to approve the minutes of January 21, 2016: D. Burke**

**2<sup>nd</sup>: S. Pawlina**

**(Unanimously Approved by Committee)**

**Update on RI Wellness Collaborate Workshop on 1/28/16 and WED's WellSAT policy assessment:**

D. Burke - On January 28<sup>th</sup> E. Shalvey, P. McGee, D. Burke, and S. Pawlina attended the RIDE Wellness workshop presented by K. Wetherill. They will meet again on March 3, April 27, and June 2 to discuss the changes that have occurred in the wellness laws throughout the years. They will be working on the creation of the wellness policy based on the criteria of the state which will include monitoring of this wellness policy. The plan is to finalize a policy which will meet the state requirements as well as meet the needs of the Woonsocket Education Department. Information from these meetings will be brought back to this committee for input and discussion about how to help adapt it to WED's policy.

S. Pawlina - The items and health issues discussed were similar to those mentioned at the initial wellness meeting, such as obesity. She would like the committee to consider the vast amount of mental health issues in this district which also ties in with obesity. Obesity is one of WED's biggest challenges, and the two go hand in hand. She hopes the proposed budget is passed and the district is able to include social workers and/or psychologists. WED is short in many areas and mental health issues seem to remain on the surface. Poverty and homelessness are often related to mental health. These issues also impact the budget.

E. Shalvey – The WellSAT scoring was completed and, as expected WED's policy scored poorly. WellSAT, which is part of the Rudd Center and Yale University, is an online scoring of your current wellness policy. It identifies certain language that is missing or ineffective. It is broken down into sections, specific to

food, nutrition education, physical education, parent outreach, and many other things. The current policy has no language for monitoring.

**Committee Discussion** - Members discussed the idea of having mental health care professionals (possibly from Thundermist) present in the schools. If reimbursements of some kind were feasible, embedding counselors in school buildings could be beneficial to those that needed it. If the services were readily available on site it is more likely that students will utilize them. A service as basic as making the first connection to help set up the referral would be helpful as would providing space to make treatment more accessible and available to those in need.

This subcommittee would like the wellness policy to take a proactive approach to bringing in these types of services.

Connecting for Children and Families does have after school physical activities; the location is impractical for some students to walk. There are no funds in WED's budget for bussing. In the past George Nasuti set up walking busses where kids could meet and walk in a group from one location to another. This can be explored further. Getting more use out of the bike path can also be discussed at future meetings.

**Motion to continue discussion on item # 3 on the Agenda at the next Health and Wellness Subcommittee Meeting which will take place on March 28: M. Thompson**

**2<sup>nd</sup>: S. Pawlina**

**(Unanimously Approved by Committee)**

The meeting was adjourned at 5:01.

Respectfully submitted by: Linda Houle